enhancing communication, coordination and interaction, and exchanged views on carrying the process forward in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence. Talks on the remaining six subjects of the Composite Dialogue *i.e.* Siachen, Sir Creek, Tulbul Navigation Project, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking, and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields, were held in the last week of July and first half of August, and views were exchanged on these issues. During discussions on Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields, wide-ranging proposals were made for promoting friendly exchanges and cooperation in the fields of art, culture, archaeology, education, science and technology, youth affairs and sports, media and tourism. India also made a series of proposals for trade promotion, transit, cooperation in the fields of agriculture, petroleum and natural gas, banking, information technology, telecommunications, postal services, civil aviation, shipping, capital market, etc. between the two countries. A meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, to review the overall progress, is scheduled to be held in India on September 5-6, 2004. It would be preceded by a meeting between the Foreign Secretaries on September 4, 2004.

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

2438. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to control the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) which damage law and order and political stability;

(b) if so, whether the Customs Officials lack awareness and training because of highly sensitive nature of the technology;

(c) whether the United States, under directions of the UN Security Council, has started to organise workshops and train Indian Custom officials in detecting WMDs to check its transnational smuggling and proliferation;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) who is going to fund the training programmes, the US or the UN?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Government attaches the

highest priority to preventing the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

(b) Strengthened Customs Controls are in place to prevent proliferation of sensitive technologies.

(c) There are no workshops being organised for Indian Customs officials under the direction of the United Nations Security Council.

(d) Does not arise.

Truck drivers hostage crisis

2439. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Indians are being sent to Iraq from third countries as is clear from case of three Indian truck drivers taken hostage in Iraq;

(b) whether Government have taken any measures to stop giving emigration clearance for Jordan, Kuwait and UAE from where many Indian head to Iraq;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the security situation is not congenial to work in Iraq; and

(e) if so, the measures taken to appeal to all Indians not to go there and also to come back if they are in Iraq?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Ves, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government have issued instructions to the Protectors of Emigrants that while granting ECNR and ECRs to Indian nationals going abroad, a specific entry—"NOT VALID FOR TRAVEL TO IRAQ"—shall be made in each case by the POE.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The Government have issued a travel advisory advising Indian nationals to defer their travel to Iraq for the time being. Government has